

The Vince Evert Memorial Bursary

Queensland Boulder Opal Association
Queen of Gems International Boulder Opal Jewellery Design Awards

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Vince Evert and wife, Poss. Winton, Qld. 1981
Photo taken for "A Day in the Life of Australia"

The Vince Evert Memorial Bursary pays tribute to Vince Evert, a visionary within the Queensland Opal Industry during the 40 years that he was involved, from mining opal through to wholesale and retail selling.

Vince Evert and a committee of local miners founded the Queensland Boulder Opal Association in Winton in 1992. Vince, who had long realised the potential of this beautiful gemstone, was elected President of the committee, and organised the first, and very successful, Boulder Opal Auction held in Winton on the 29th May 1993.

Vince was born in Winton in 1932. Vince's father, who from time to time bought a few opal stones from the local miners, sparked Vince's interest in the gemstone, and in the 1960's, Vince started a small mine while helping to raise his young family. At the time, there was only minimal market interest in Boulder Opal. He became more involved in mining in the 1970's through the support of Des Burton, a miner from the Quilpie area. In the 1980's, Vince purchased a retail Opal shop in Townsville; this gave him an outlet for the Boulder Opal gemstones that he was producing on the fields.

From the 1970's until the early 1980's, Vince traveled to Tucson, Arizona (USA) to the well-known gem shows. He saw enormous potential in the American market for interesting, artistic, natural Opal stones,

expressly different from the more conservative, high end market in Japan. He especially saw the middle to low-end grades as appealing to fashion jewellery, and was always encouraging their use in varied, fascinating, and out of the ordinary ways.

Vince was so enthusiastic of his Boulder Opal, he was regularly meeting people from all over the world and taking them to his fields, giving them the bush experience. He had a great interest in the youth of Australia, and went out of his way to encourage them to further their interests and their studies.

Over the past 35 years, at some time all ten of his children have been involved in the Opal industry, from mining, cutting, wholesale, retail stores, and manufacturing jewellery. Today, four of his children are still very much involved in the Boulder Opal industry. Such was Vince's passion, he did not retire; he was still mining with his son, James, and involved in a retail shop with daughter, Mary, in Cairns, up until his passing in 1998. Vince had a long affiliation with Boulder Opal and the QBOA, and is remembered fondly as a modern day pioneer and for his commitment to the opal industry.

The Queensland Boulder Opal Association is honoured to pay tribute to Vince Evert in the form of this Bursary to assist an Emerging Jeweller in the costs involved to further their career in Jewellery Design and Manufacture.

The Bursary is for \$300 and applies to apprentices or students studying Jewellery Design and Manufacture who are eligible according to the criteria.

Eligibility:

Must have an entry in the QBOA 'Queen of Gems' Design Awards, Jewellery Section, Category 2 for Emerging Jewellers.

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Please read the *Terms and Conditions* of the QBOA 'Queen of Gems' Design Awards

Application Details:

<i>Entrant Name</i>		
<i>Address</i>		
<i>Town/Suburb</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Postcode</i>
<i>Phone (+area code)</i>	<i>Mobile</i>	<i>Email</i>
<i>Company Name (if applicable)</i>		
<i>Jewellery Course (if applicable)</i>		<i>Year of Study</i>
<i>Lecturer Name (if applicable)</i>		
<i>Lecturer Email (if applicable)</i>		<i>Lecturer Phone (+area code)</i>
<i>TAFE/University/Private Studio Class (if applicable)</i>		
<i>In 100 words, tell us about yourself, your future plans, and how this bursary would be of assistance to you:</i>		